



## **DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

### **Federal Aviation Administration**

#### **14 CFR Part 39**

**[Docket No. FAA-2021-0254; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00481-R]**

**RIN 2120-AA64**

#### **Airworthiness Directives; Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Helicopters**

**AGENCY:** Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

**SUMMARY:** The FAA proposes to adopt a new airworthiness directive (AD) for all Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters. This proposed AD was prompted by reports of chafing marks on the wiring harness behind the middle side panels in the area of the front passenger (PAX) panels. This proposed AD would require inspecting, modifying, and rerouting the wiring harness, as specified in a European Union Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) AD, which is proposed for incorporation by reference (IBR). The FAA is proposing this AD to address the unsafe condition on these products.

**DATES:** The FAA must receive comments on this proposed AD by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may send comments, using the procedures found in 14 CFR 11.43 and 11.45, by any of the following methods:

- Federal eRulemaking Portal: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments.
- Fax: 202-493-2251.

- Mail: U.S. Department of Transportation, Docket Operations, M-30, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, Washington, DC 20590.

- Hand Delivery: Deliver to Mail address above between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

For material that is proposed for IBR in this AD, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email [ADs@easa.europa.eu](mailto:ADs@easa.europa.eu); Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this material on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 817-222-5110. It is also available in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0254.

#### **Examining the AD Docket**

You may examine the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0254; or in person at Docket Operations between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays. The AD docket contains this NPRM, any comments received, and other information. The street address for Docket Operations is listed above. Comments will be available in the AD docket shortly after receipt.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone 562-627-5371; email [blaine.williams@faa.gov](mailto:blaine.williams@faa.gov).

## **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

### **Comments Invited**

The FAA invites you to send any written relevant data, views, or arguments about this proposal. Send your comments to an address listed under ADDRESSES. Include “Docket No. FAA-2021-0254; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00481-R” at the beginning of your comments. The most helpful comments reference a specific portion of the proposal, explain the reason for any recommended change, and include supporting data. The FAA will consider all comments received by the closing date and may amend this proposal because of those comments.

Except for Confidential Business Information (CBI) as described in the following paragraph, and other information as described in 14 CFR 11.35, the FAA will post all comments received, without change, to <https://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information you provide. The agency will also post a report summarizing each substantive verbal contact received about this proposal.

### **Confidential Business Information**

CBI is commercial or financial information that is both customarily and actually treated as private by its owner. Under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) (5 U.S.C. 552), CBI is exempt from public disclosure. If your comments responsive to this NPRM contain commercial or financial information that is customarily treated as private, that you actually treat as private, and that is relevant or responsive to this NPRM, it is important that you clearly designate the submitted comments as CBI. Please mark each page of your submission containing CBI as “PROPIN.” The FAA will treat such marked submissions as confidential under the FOIA, and they will not be placed in the public docket of this NPRM. Submissions containing CBI should be sent to Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, 3960 Paramount Blvd, Lakewood, California 90712; telephone 562-627-5371; email

blaine.williams@faa.gov. Any commentary that the FAA receives that is not specifically designated as CBI will be placed in the public docket for this rulemaking.

## **Discussion**

The EASA, which is the Technical Agent for the Member States of the European Union, has issued EASA AD 2019-0305, dated December 17, 2019 (EASA AD 2019-0305) to correct an unsafe condition for all Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK117 D-2 helicopters.

This proposed AD was prompted by reports of chafing marks found on the wiring harness behind the middle side panels, in the area of the front PAX panels. According to EASA, subsequent investigations identified low clearance between the harness and the surrounding structure. Airbus Helicopters identified the cause of the chafing marks as contact of the harness with the front PAX panel screws. The FAA is proposing this AD to prevent failure of the helicopter wiring harness. See the EASA AD for additional background information.

## **Related Service Information Under 1 CFR Part 51**

EASA AD 2019-0305 specifies inspecting the wiring harness installed behind the front PAX panel of the left and right hand middle side panels and depending on the results, repairing or modifying the wiring harness. For a modified wiring harness, EASA AD 2019-0305 specifies repetitively inspecting for damage.

The FAA also reviewed Airbus Helicopters Alert Service Bulletin (ASB) No. MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003, Revision 1 and dated December 9, 2019 (ASB MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003). ASB MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003 applies to Model MBB-BK-117 D-2 and D-2m helicopters. This service information specifies inspecting, repairing, and modifying the wiring harness installed behind the front PAX panel of the left and right hand middle side panels. This material is reasonably available because the interested

parties have access to it through their normal course of business or by the means identified in the ADDRESSES section.

### **FAA's Determination and Requirements of this Proposed AD**

These products have been approved by the aviation authority of another country, and are approved for operation in the United States. Pursuant to the bilateral agreement with the State of Design Authority, the FAA has been notified of the unsafe condition described in the EASA AD referenced above. The FAA is proposing this AD after evaluating all the relevant information and determining the unsafe condition described previously is likely to exist or develop in other products of the same type designs.

### **Proposed AD Requirements**

This proposed AD would require accomplishing the actions specified in EASA AD 2019-0305, described previously, as incorporated by reference, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD and except as discussed under "Differences Between this Proposed AD and EASA AD 2019-0305."

### **Explanation of Required Compliance Information**

In the FAA's ongoing efforts to improve the efficiency of the AD process, the FAA initially worked with Airbus and EASA to develop a process to use certain EASA ADs as the primary source of information for compliance with requirements for corresponding FAA ADs. The FAA has since coordinated with other manufacturers and civil aviation authorities (CAAs) to use this process. As a result, EASA AD 2019-0305 will be incorporated by reference in the FAA final rule. This proposed AD would, therefore, require compliance with EASA AD 2019-0305 in its entirety, through that incorporation, except for any differences identified as exceptions in the regulatory text of this proposed AD. Using common terms that are the same as the heading of a particular section in the EASA AD does not mean that operators need comply only with that section. For example, where the AD requirement refers to "all required actions and

compliance times,” compliance with this AD requirement is not limited to the section titled “Required Action(s) and Compliance Time(s)” in the EASA AD. Service information specified in EASA AD 2019-0305 that is required for compliance with EASA AD 2019-0305 will be available on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0254 after the FAA final rule is published.

### **Differences Between this Proposed AD and EASA AD 2019-0305**

Where the EASA AD refers to flight hours, this proposed AD would use hours time-in-service (TIS) instead. Where the EASA AD allows a tolerance to the compliance time of certain initial and repetitive inspections, this proposed AD would require a compliance time of within 440 hours TIS after modification of an affected part for a certain initial inspection and thereafter at intervals within 440 hours TIS for certain repetitive inspections instead. Where the EASA AD requires repetitive inspections in accordance with paragraph 3.B.8. of ASB MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003, this proposed AD would require repetitive inspections in accordance with paragraph 3.B.9. of ASB MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003.

### **Costs of Compliance**

The FAA estimates that this AD affects 60 helicopters of U.S. Registry. Labor rates are estimated at \$85 per work-hour. Based on these numbers, the FAA estimates that operators may incur the following costs in order to comply with this proposed AD.

Inspecting the wiring harness would take about 6 work-hours for an estimated cost of \$510 per helicopter and \$30,600 for the U.S. fleet, per inspection cycle.

Modification during the inspection of the wiring harness would take about 6 work-hours for an estimated cost of \$510 per helicopter.

## **Authority for this Rulemaking**

Title 49 of the United States Code specifies the FAA's authority to issue rules on aviation safety. Subtitle I, section 106, describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII: Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the Agency's authority.

The FAA is issuing this rulemaking under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart III, Section 44701: General requirements. Under that section, Congress charges the FAA with promoting safe flight of civil aircraft in air commerce by prescribing regulations for practices, methods, and procedures the Administrator finds necessary for safety in air commerce. This regulation is within the scope of that authority because it addresses an unsafe condition that is likely to exist or develop on products identified in this rulemaking action.

## **Regulatory Findings**

The FAA determined that this proposed AD would not have federalism implications under Executive Order 13132. This proposed AD would not have a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the national Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government.

For the reasons discussed above, I certify this proposed regulation:

- (1) Is not a "significant regulatory action" under Executive Order 12866,
- (2) Will not affect intrastate aviation in Alaska, and
- (3) Will not have a significant economic impact, positive or negative, on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

## **List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 39**

Air transportation, Aircraft, Aviation safety, Incorporation by reference, Safety.

## **The Proposed Amendment**

Accordingly, under the authority delegated to me by the Administrator, the FAA proposes to amend 14 CFR part 39 as follows:

### **PART 39 - AIRWORTHINESS DIRECTIVES**

1. The authority citation for part 39 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(g), 40113, 44701.

#### **§ 39.13 [Amended]**

2. The FAA amends § 39.13 by adding the following new airworthiness directive:

**Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH:** Docket No. FAA-2021-0254; Project Identifier MCAI-2020-00481-R.

#### **(a) Comments Due Date**

The FAA must receive comments by [INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

#### **(b) Affected Airworthiness Directives (ADs)**

None.

#### **(c) Applicability**

This AD applies to all Airbus Helicopters Deutschland GmbH Model MBB-BK 117 D-2 helicopters, certificated in any category.

#### **(d) Subject**

Joint Aircraft System Component (JASC) Code: 1497, Miscellaneous Wiring.

#### **(e) Reason**

This AD was prompted by reports of chafing marks found on the wiring harness behind the middle side panels, in the area of the front passenger panels. Further investigations identified low clearance between the harness and the surrounding structure. Airbus Helicopters identified the cause of the chafing marks as contact of the harness with the front passenger panel screws. The FAA is issuing this AD to prevent electrical failure of the helicopter wiring harness.



**(f) Compliance**

Comply with this AD within the compliance times specified, unless already done.

**(g) Requirements**

Except as specified in paragraph (h) of this AD: Comply with all required actions and compliance times specified in, and in accordance with, EASA AD 2019-0305, dated December 17, 2019 (EASA AD 2019-0305).

**(h) Exceptions to EASA AD 2019-0305**

(1) Where EASA AD 2019-0305 refers to its effective date, this AD requires using the effective date of this AD.

(2) Where EASA AD 2019-0305 refers to flight hours (FH), this AD requires using hours time-in-service (TIS).

(3) Where paragraph (6) of EASA AD 2019-0305 specifies a compliance time for the initial inspection of within 400 flight hours after the modification of an affected part and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 400 flight hours, plus a non-cumulative tolerance of 40 flight hours, this AD requires a compliance time of within 440 hours TIS after the modification of an affected part for the initial inspection and thereafter at intervals not exceeding 440 hours TIS.

(4) Where paragraph (6) of EASA AD specifies repetitive inspections in accordance with paragraph 3.B.8. of the referenced Alert Service Bulletin (ASB), this AD requires repetitive inspections in accordance with paragraph 3.B.9. of ASB No. MBB-BK117 D-2-88A-003, Revision 1 and dated December 9, 2019.

(5) Where the service information referenced in EASA AD 2019-0305 specifies to use tooling, equivalent tooling may be used.

(6) The “Remarks” section of EASA AD 2019-0305 does not apply to this AD.

**(i) Special Flight Permit**

Special flight permits, as described in 14 CFR 21.197 and 21.199, are not allowed.

**(j) Alternative Methods of Compliance (AMOCs)**

(1) The Manager, International Validation Branch, FAA, has the authority to approve AMOCs for this AD, if requested using the procedures found in 14 CFR 39.19. In accordance with 14 CFR 39.19, send your request to your principal inspector or local Flight Standards District Office, as appropriate. If sending information directly to the manager of the International Validation Branch, send it to the attention of the person identified in paragraph (k)(2) of this AD. Information may be emailed to: 9-AVS-AIR-730-AMOC@faa.gov.

(2) Before using any approved AMOC, notify your appropriate principal inspector, or lacking a principal inspector, the manager of the local flight standards district office/certificate holding district office.

**(k) Related Information**

(1) For EASA AD 2019-0305, contact the EASA, Konrad-Adenauer-Ufer 3, 50668 Cologne, Germany; telephone +49 221 8999 000; email ADs@easa.europa.eu; Internet [www.easa.europa.eu](http://www.easa.europa.eu). You may find this EASA AD on the EASA website at <https://ad.easa.europa.eu>. You may view this material at the FAA, Office of the Regional Counsel, Southwest Region, 10101 Hillwood Pkwy., Room 6N-321, Fort Worth, TX 76177. For information on the availability of this material at the FAA, call 817-222-5110. This material may be found in the AD docket on the Internet at <https://www.regulations.gov> by searching for and locating Docket No. FAA-2021-0254.

(2) For more information about this AD, contact Blaine Williams, Aerospace Engineer, Los Angeles ACO Branch, Compliance & Airworthiness Division, 3960

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blaine.williams@faa.gov.

Issued on March 25, 2021.

Gaetano A. Sciortino, Deputy Director for Strategic Initiatives,  
Compliance & Airworthiness Division,  
Aircraft Certification Service.

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